

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 L-03 SCA-01 JUSE-00 SEC-01 SS-15

NSC-05 /053 W

----- 041442

R 271800Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5197

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS

SUBJECT: MINISTER OF PUBLIC SECURITY WARNS VESCO

REF: A. SAN JOSE 4594

B. SAN JOSE 4612

1. SEPTEMBER 23 PRESS CARRIED REPLY OF MINISTER OF PUBLIC SECURITY MARIO CHARPENTIER TO ROBERT VESCO LETTER WHICH WAS PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 22 (REFTEL A). CHARPENTIER STATES THAT VESCO LETTER CAN BE REDUCED TO TWO MAJOR POINTS: (1) HIS SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO THE UNITED STATES; AND (2) HIS DESIRE TO BRING FOREIGN GUNMEN TOHOBOSTA RICA AS "SECURITY PROFESSIONALES." ON THE FIRST POINT, CHARPENTIER SAYS THAT HE IS NOT INTERESTED IN VESCO'S PROBLEMS WITH THE UNITED STATES OR WITH THOSE WHO ASSERT THAT VESCO OWES THEM MONEY. "WHAT HE HAS DONE OUTSIDE OF COSTA RICA, WHAT HE MAINTAINS OUTSIDE OF COSTA RICA IS HIS PROBLEM... I AM NOT INTERESTED IN HIS PERSONAL PROBLEMS NOR IN THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE UNITED STATES." REFERRING TO VESCO'S RENEWED ALLEGATIONS RE THE WILKINS CASE, CHARPENTIER DISMISSES THAT CASE AS INSUFFICIENTLY SERIOUS TO WARRANT JUDICIAL ACTION (REFTEL B).

2. CHARPENTIER THEN GOES ON TO STATE THAT WHAT DOES INTEREST HIM IS WHAT VESCO DOES IN COSTA RICA, AND THAT, WITH REFERENCE
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TO POINT TWO ABOVE, VESCO HAS STEPPED CLEARLY INTO HIS JURIS-

DICTION AND AREA OF COMPETENCE. HE SAYS THAT VESCO WANTED TO BRING INTO COSTA RICA "FOREIGN KILLERS WITH CRIMINAL RECORDS" UNDER THE GUISE OF "SECURITY PROFESSIONALS." CHARPENTIER ALLUDES TO THE POSSIBLE THREAT THAT "ARMED MERCENARIES" COULD POSE TO THE LIFE OF ANY COSTA RICAN--"EVEN OUR MOST OUTSTANDING NATIONAL POLITICAL FIGURES"-- AND STATES THAT NEITHER VESCO NOR ANYBODY ELSE WILL BE ALLOWED TO BRING SUCH PEOPLE INTO THE COUNTRY. AFTER CLARIFYING THAT HIS DISCOVERY OF YACHTS ON VESCO'S GUANACASTE PROPERTY WAS ACCIDENTAL, THAT HE HAD GONE THERE TO SEARCH FOR "PROFESSIONALS", CHARPENTIER STATES:"... I MAKE CLEAR TO MR. VESCO, NOW THAT HE HAS PLACED HIMSELF IN MY AREA, THAT I AM ON MY GUARD, WITH MY EYES WIDE OPEN." LETTER CLOSES WITH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SECURITY HAS SAME RESPONSIBILITY TO VESCO AS TO ANY OTHER RESIDENT BUT NOTES THERE IS GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THAT "AND PERMITTING HIM TO HAVE HERE A TEAM OF UNDESIRABLE FOREIGNERS."

3. COMMENT: CHARPENTIER'S SLAP AT VESCO IS AS STRAIGHT FORWARD A HIGH LEVEL PUBLIC WARNING THAT VESCO HAS EVER RECEIVED IN COSTA RICA. IT IS PART OF A GROWING ATMOSPHERE OF TESTINESS TOWARD VESCO THAT SEEMS TO BE BUILDING (SEPTEL).
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECURITY, POLICE FORCES, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976SANJO04673
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760366-0791
From: SAN JOSE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760916/aaaaanou.tel
Line Count: 83
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 SAN JOSE 4594, 76 SAN JOSE 4612
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 JUL 2004 by coburnhl>; APPROVED <29 OCT 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MINISTER OF PUBLIC SECURITY WARNS VESCO
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS, (VESCO, ROBERT L)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006